REMARKS

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 and 3-7 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Figures 5 and 6 of Crary et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended and claims structure not disclosed by Crary et al., or taught by the combination of Crary et al. and Beyer et al. Claim 1, in partial pertinent part, claims, "said modular flange having a bottom side as a valve seat," and "said valve assembly having a valve member and a buoyant float connected together with a valve member support stem to form a buoyant float assembly, and wherein the valve assembly attachment means comprises at least one deflectable leg member." The Applicants contend that Crary et al. and Beyer et al. do not disclose "said modular flange having a bottom side as a valve seat." Crary et al. discloses another part (234), not the flange itself (208), as a valve seat; therefore, Applicants' claimed structure is different from Crary et al. One advantage of Applicants' claimed structure is the use of less parts and its associated cost advantage and ease of assembly. Therefore, claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and likewise, because of their ultimate dependency from claim 1, claims 3-7 are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has rejected claims 2 and 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Crary et al. in view of Beyer et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 2 has been cancelled, and its content incorporated into claim 1. Claim 8 has been amended and claims structure not taught by Crary et al. in view of Beyer et al. Claim 8 now claims, in partial pertinent part, "a valve member extending towards said open end of said housing and a float, said float assembly valve member and said float

connected by a cylindrical stem having a diameter smaller than a diameter of an aperture defined by a modular flange mounted to a fuel tank," and also, "said modular flange having a bottom side as a valve seat for said valve member." The Applicants contend that Crary et al. does not disclose "said modular flange having a bottom side as a valve seat for said valve member." Crary et al. discloses another part (234), not the flange itself (208), as a valve seat; therefore, Applicants' claimed structure is different from Crary et al. One advantage of Applicants' claimed structure is the use of less parts and its associated cost advantage and ease of assembly. Additionally, this claimed structure is not taught by the combination of Crary et al. and Beyer et al. Furthermore, Crary et al. and Beyer et al. do not together teach "said float assembly valve member and said float connected by a cylindrical stem having a diameter smaller than a diameter of an aperture defined by a modular flange mounted to a fuel tank." Finally, neither Crary et al. nor Beyer et al. discloses, nor together do they teach, a valve member and a stem, with its associated diameter relative to a flange aperture, that seals against the periphery of the flange aperture. The Applicants now believe claim 8 and claims 9-11, which ultimately depend from claim 8, to be in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt

and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 12/1/04

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